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SHORT DISCOURSES FOR FAMILIES.

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COLOSSIANS, I. 28.—“WHOM WE PREACH.”

To a person acquainted with the writings of the Apostle Paul, it would be superfluous to remark, that Jesus Christ was the grand object, to which he uniformly endeavored to direct the attention of all those to whom he either preached or wrote.

However various the manners, opinions and prejudices of the people might be in the different places where he was permitted to address them, on religious subjects, the substance of his message was still the same.

The state of the people doubtless suggested the method to be adopted; and a variety of facts would necessarily be stated in some places, which might very well be dispensed with in others, whilst his aim in reference both to Jew and Gentile, to the wise and the unwise, was to bring them to the knowledge of Christ crucified, that they might be saved.

So ardent was his desire that the knowledge of Christ might universally prevail, that he rejoiced when he was preached, whatever might be the motive of the preacher; “Whether in pretence or in truth,” said he, “Christ is preached, and I therein do rejoice, yea and will rejoice.”

Now, if Jesus Christ was the substance of the Apostle’s message, the grand object exhibited by him in every sermon and in every epistle; if he determined to know nothing but Jesus, and him crucified; it certainly becomes us to enquire in what manner he exhibited Jesus Christ to the world.

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1. And here it may be remarked, that the first personal interview which this Apostle had with the Saviour of men, was well calculated to impress his mind with an awful apprehension of the dignity of his character. By an audible voice from Heaven, he was thus interrogated: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" and then assured that it was Jesus of Nazareth whom he was persecuting, and by whom he was now arrested in his sinful course. Not long after this period, as we learn from the sacred history, he received his sight, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and straightway preached Christ in the synagogue, *that he is the Son of God*. The other Apostles who beheld the glory of the only begotten of the Father, were not more fully persuaded of his divine excellency than Paul; nor did he appear to be less sensible of his unspeakable obligations to the Saviour, or manifest a zeal in his cause, less ardent than theirs. He was in no respect inferior to the most eminent of the Apostles; with whom he cordially united in preaching Jesus Christ to the world as a *Divine Person*. From them we learn that all men are bound to honor the Son even as they honor the Father who sent him; nay further, that "all the Angels of Heaven are commanded to worship him."

And such criminality was, in the Apostle's estimation, attached to the want of love to Emmanuel, that he did not hesitate to denounce the most dreadful anathemas against any man, that loved not the Lord Jesus Christ.

In exhibiting Jesus Christ as the brightness of the Father's glory, the Apostles aimed to excite in the minds of their fellow men, an affection correspondent to his supreme excellence: to bring them to regard him as "the chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely." Supreme love to Jesus Christ was very far from being an unimportant part of the system advocated by these holy men. They considered love to Christ as a necessary ingredient in every act of obedience, and enjoined it as a thing proper and necessary independent of all the advantages resulting from this affection to those who cherish it.

2. But Christ was not only exhibited as worthy of supreme regard in consequence of the glory of his character; but, at the same time he was proclaimed to be *the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world*.

To preach him successfully in this point of view, they found it necessary to apprise their hearers, that the condition of mankind, through the entrance of sin into the world, and in consequence of its universal prevalence, made the interposition of a Saviour necessary for their present and their

future peace. Hence their repeated efforts to instruct all, of every class, respecting the spirituality, the extent, and the unchangeable obligation of the divine law, and to evince by incontrovertible evidence the impossibility of obtaining the favor of God, by the deeds of the law. Much depended on the reception given, or the attention paid by their hearers, to this part of their message. They who felt not disposed to abandon their iniquitous courses, found not much difficulty in providing a pretext, plausible at least to themselves, for rejecting a doctrine so unpopular as that which asserts the total depravity of man; or the doctrine so closely allied to this, that all mankind are by nature children of wrath. An opposition to those humiliating truths united Jew and Gentile against the Heralds of the Cross, who first boldly published these doctrines to the world; and a similar temper has had a much greater influence than any other cause, in crowding the camps of infidelity in later ages. Had the Apostles been so indifferent to the best interests of their fellow men, or so unprincipled as to suffer the inclinations of their hearers to dictate the message which they should deliver them, in the name of the Lord, then indeed they might have escaped persecution for the cross of Christ: but they well knew that to please men thus, and at the same time to be the servants of Christ, was impossible. Not human applause, but zeal for the honor of their divine master, pointed to the subjects which they should discuss, and to the proper manner of handling them.

That a sinner might be disposed to give to Christ the honor due to his name, and to repose that confidence in him which he requires, in order to partake of his salvation, they well knew, that he must be apprised of the sentence of condemnation that had passed against him; and of the impossibility of obtaining the favor of God, except through the mediation of his Son. They therefore proclaimed that all had sinned, that by the deeds of the law none could be justified, and that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, must be the inevitable portion of all who rejected the Saviour whom they preached, and the great salvation which he had provided.

No wonder that under the pungent addresses of those holy men, who spake what they knew, and testified to what they had seen and felt, the sinner was often heard to exclaim, "Men and Brethren! what shall I do to be saved?"

They replied to this enquiry by preaching Jesus Christ.—"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Such is the dignity of his person, and the value of his atonement, that the

Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake : they therefore proclaimed him able to save to the uttermost all that come to God by him. The experience of the Apostle Paul might have been happily adverted to as illustrative of the doctrine which he preached. He had been the chief of sinners—a furious persecutor and injurious ; yet, through the death of Christ, he had obtained mercy. The favor shewn to him was not only calculated to encourage him much in his arduous labors, but to cheer him with a hope, even with regard to those *who opposed themselves*, that God would give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.

The command of Jesus Christ to his Apostles to commence their ministerial labors after his resurrection in Jerusalem, is certainly calculated to encourage the vilest offenders to apply for mercy in his name ; and when it is seen that the first trophies of his victorious grace were found among those who conspired his death, who can doubt respecting the efficacy of that death, or venture to limit his boundless compassion?

But the Apostles were far from thinking their work finished, when they had given their testimony to the divinity of Jesus Christ, and to the efficacy of his death. They were anxious that their hearers should so understand the gospel-message, and revere the authority by which Christ was preached, as to accept of him without delay, and avail themselves of all the benefits of his mediation.

Their message was not delivered in the form of counsel or advice, which a sinner might observe or reject, as his inclinations should prompt ; but as ambassadors for Christ, they authoritatively announced in his name the only admissible terms of a sinner's reconciliation to God ; and to their pressing invitations they added the command of God, to induce sinners to accede to those terms. For the neglector of the salvation of Christ there was nothing consolatory in their message ; nay, they assured him that if the despiser of Moses' law died without mercy, he would certainly be considered worthy of punishment much more severe, who should be found guilty of the abuse of gospel privileges.

And have you, my hearers, no concern in these declarations ? Is it to have no influence on your future destiny, that Christ has been preached to you ? Has God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life ? And shall this gift be contemptuously rejected—this love slighted —this life eternal, so dearly purchased, refused ; and no evil result from this opposition to the gracious interposition of Heaven ? Let no sinner flatter himself with a hope so delusive.

The gospel will be a savor of life or a savor of death.— To the sinner that believes, pardon and life are insured ; but for the rebel that contemns the offered mercy, nothing remains but a certain fearful expectation of judgment and fiery indignation.

3. Again, Christ was preached as the *pattern* of believers.

It was announced to be his design to purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works, and that in conformity with this intention, his Spirit was afforded in his saving influence to every believer ; enabling all such, to put off the old man with his deeds, to depart from all iniquity, and to imitate *his* example, who was holy, harmless, and undefiled.

Have you, my brethren, paid sufficient attention to this pattern ? Zeal for the honor of God, and compassion for miserable man ; patience under the pressure of the heaviest load of affliction that was ever sustained ; perfect resignation to the will of his heavenly Father, adorned his spotless character, excited the astonishment of his enemies and persecutors, and shone in all his actions. He literally went about doing good ; and mingled with his expiring groans on the cross, was offered to his heavenly Father his fervent prayer for his murderers : “ Father forgive them, they know not what they do.” My hearers ! if this be the pattern attentively observed, the example carefully imitated by *Christians*, where shall they be found ? If to deserve this appellation a person must be zealous, meek, patient, humble, and spiritually minded, such persons may without difficulty be recognized among the proud, the uncharitable, the envious, the impatient, and the worldly minded, with whom they of necessity are intermingled in the present world.

Yes, the christian spirit and the spirit of the world are not so similar in their operations and fruits, as to be easily mistaken by men who are honest and candid.

There would, in innumerable instances, be no room for uncertainty or doubt respecting the real characters of men, could they be induced to bring their life to the proper standard, and enquire impartially, whether or not, they have the same mind that was in Christ, and are walking as he walked. But as the person required to make this examination, is so deeply interested in the result, it is hardly to be expected that all that impartiality will be exercised, which in a decision which could affect only the interests of other persons, we should have a right to expect.

In forming an estimate of their *own* characters, men are apt to be very lenient, in cases which would be differently viewed were self entirely out of the question. Many can

very easily perceive that they are far from the possession of that degree of conformity to the example of Christ which has been attained by others ; but they allege in behalf of themselves, that their case is singular ; that the obstacles in their way are so difficult to surmount, that it would be unreasonable to require from them that improvement of christian privileges, or that progress in piety, which are properly required of others who are in circumstances more auspicious.

To remove a difficulty of this sort, or to ascertain the full merit of such an excuse for the want of eminent piety, more minute and circumstantial information would be requisite respecting the obstacles which retard the apologists in their heavenly course, and are deemed sufficient to justify their failures. When peculiar difficulties arise from the station in which a person is placed, or from the society with which he is connected, it may be sometimes found expedient, to relinquish his station and connect himself with a different society ; but when neither of these can consistently be done, if he be a disciple of Christ, he may confidently look up to him for all that grace, which the difficulties of his situation render necessary for him. We must not accede to the opinion that the example of Christ is to be imitated only by those who find no difficulty in the imitation. It will be found, however, that the defects of professors, and their want of ardent piety, are not to be attributed to their place of abode or their outward circumstances, but to a corrupt heart. And shall human depravity be pleaded in justification of neglect of the example of Christ ? If so, the greater the depravity of the heart, the more valid will the excuse be, derived from this source, for the neglect of duty ; the sinner entirely enslaved and led captive at the will of the tempter, will be faultless : and they only will be found guilty, who, finding no difficulty to conform their lives to the example of Christ, yet fail to imitate him. It is probable that some of the disciples of Christ find more difficulty than others, in conforming their lives to the gospel standard ; but are we ready to admit that because a duty is difficult, we may innocently dispense with the performance of it ? Or are we tamely to submit to the dominion of unhallowed passions because they are unruly ? Has not grace been provided for us, because we needed that grace ? And shall we adopt the sentiment, that however efficacious the grace of God may have been in the deliverance of persons less depraved than ourselves, from the thraldom of sin, it would nevertheless be presumptuous in us to expect deliverance through this grace, and by the blessing of God, on means similar to those which they had successfully

employed? The example of Christ is set before each of you, for your imitation; and to all who desire to walk in his footsteps encouragements are now presented, equal to those which formerly cheered the hearts of those who resisted unto blood striving against sin.

To mortify every corrupt affection and to put on the new man, may indeed, appear to be an arduous task. It is so; but the bare possibility of succeeding in such an attempt, ought to induce you to make the most vigorous and persevering efforts. But success is more than *possible*. A sincere desire, and persevering efforts to comply with what is enjoined on us as our duty, will ensure success. It cannot be thought that the Saviour, after having made ample provision for the salvation of all that apply for mercy in his name, will withhold from any who make such application, the grace which is necessary for the accomplishment of his purpose. If therefore, a sinner remain unsanctified, it must be because he has never applied to Christ for his sanctifying grace; for, after all the apologies offered by sinners to quiet their fears, it will be found that the grand obstacle in the way of their conformity to the example of Christ is an evil heart of unbelief. But they who humbly confide in the mercy of God manifested in his Son, and admire the character and example of Jesus Christ: and who, though often cast down and discouraged, still strive earnestly to be conformed to the pattern which he has set before them, are encouraged to expect that the Lord will do far more abundantly for them than they can ask or conceive; that as they advance through life, their difficulties will diminish; their confidence in God will be more firm and unshaken, until, at last, having been translated into the kingdom prepared for them, they shall see their Saviour as he is, and be forever like him.

4. And in the mean time, for the encouragement of believers during the period of their conflicts here, Jesus Christ is exhibited as their *advocate* and intercessor. “If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.”

Having been in all points tempted as his Disciples are, yet without sin, he sympathizes with them in their temptations, and will support and deliver them. Him the Father heareth always, and he will as certainly grant to humble supplicants now, for his sake, the blessings of his grace, as these blessings were formerly bestowed, during the period of our Saviour’s humiliation, when his intercessions in behalf of his people were mingled with cries and tears.

His plea in behalf of his Disciples is always availing.—

“Holy Father, keep through thine own name those that thou hast given me. By their salvation recompense the sorrows I sustained on their account. Preserve from the evil that is in the world, those whom thou hast given me; and through thine Almighty power employed for their support and safety, let them be kept through faith to salvation.”

Gracious Advocate! to thee are thy Disciples indebted for their preservation from evil, and for every advantage obtained over their spiritual adversaries: from thee do they derive those plentiful effusions of grace which purify and comfort their hearts. Thou knowest the full extent of the moral disease, from which it is thy purpose to deliver thy people; and through thy prevailing intercession in their behalf, the healing remedy shall be certainly and seasonably applied.

5. The last remark that we make from the text is, that Jesus Christ was preached as the final Judge. God hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ. All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, to the resurrection of damnation. How has it become possible for the momentary and trivial interests of the present world to divert the attention of dying men from the awful realities of the day of judgment? Where shall the wicked flee for safety, “when consternation shall turn the good man pale?”

“All things are naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do;” he is therefore qualified to officiate as Judge of all men, and to pronounce on all an equitable sentence. The mask of hypocrisy which may have concealed the treacherous hypocrite from the knowledge of his most discerning associates, must at last be laid aside; every mouth will be stopped—The sinner unable to assign any reason against the execution of the sentence passed against him—having no plea to offer in his own behalf, shall be constrained to own that the “Lord is righteous who taketh vengeance.”

He is found guilty. He is condemned. Shut out from the society of all holy and happy beings, he finds no eye to pity him, nor heart to sympathise with him, either among the righteous or the wicked.

His own conscience, whose monitions he had been accustomed to disregard, from its long slumbers now awakes, never to slumber again. He must *go away!* but whither shall he go? In what unfrequented corner of the universe shall he conceal himself and be forgotten? He must go, as Judas went, *to his own place*; a place prepared originally for other inhabitants, but not for them exclusively; a spacious prison,

the gloomy receptacle of all who have united with the first Apostate, in hostility to the government of God.

My hearers ! are any of you in danger of suffering this lasting exclusion from happiness and hope ? While Christ is preached to you, there is a possibility of your escape from a doom so dreadful. " Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall never die." Cultivate and cherish an affection correspondent to his supreme excellence, and you shall not be excluded from his presence. Imbibe his spirit, and walk as he walked, and you shall at length be admitted into his presence with exceeding joy. There you will no longer need the means which are employed here, to stir up your minds to an affectionate recollection of what he is—of what he has done for you, and of your obligations to glorify his name.—There shall you unite with all the redeemed in ascribing to him that washed them from their guilt, and made them kings and priests, all honor, and glory, and praise, and dominion forever.—AMEN.

For the Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine.

On Religious Experience.

That an infidel exhibits the grin of contempt at the very mention of *religious experience*, is not at all surprising. Such conduct is perfectly in character from men who cast away from them every thing sacred, and who think; or try to think, that they themselves are only brutes a little elevated above the quadrupeds around them. In the mean time, they have their experiences also. They know what they feel, though unwilling to tell. Heaven save us from the racking doubts, the dire forebodings of what may be hereafter, which obtrude themselves, in a dark and lonely hour, upon the soul of him who lives without God in the world, who seeks refuge in annihilation, whose ultimate hope is placed in everlasting sleep !

" Such of our fine ones in the w^{sh} refined."

But that any of those who profess to reverence the bible should join in the sneer against experimental religion, is surely a phenomenon as strange as it is deplorable. Yet, we know that such things have been. We have heard the whole interior religion of the heart, scouted with the more than whispered exclamations, ' enthusiasm, wildfire, nonsense,' by men who would take it as an insult, to be called atheists or

infidels. It is to readers of this description that I offer the following observations.

By religious experience, I understand every thing that passes in the heart of man resulting from the due impression of religious truth. Definitions are often hazardous things ; but I shall use this until I can find a better.

It is my desire always, to see and to represent religion in all its branches, as a reasonable service. If people pretend to impulses or raptures under the name of piety, which cannot be shown to accord with the above description, let them be rejected as spurious. But let us take care to discriminate the precious from the vile. Let us not throw away the wheat with the chaff. And, to pursue the figure a moment, let us remember, that the good wheat of godliness, even with some mixture of chaff, is far preferable to the empty husks of practical atheism.

Were human nature what it ought to be, and what it originally was, every child of Adam would begin, at a very early period, to enquire, where is God my Maker ? What relations connect me with him ? What notice does he take of my conduct ? How may I obtain his approbation, and secure his favor ? What is to become of me after this short, uncertain life ? What dependence has my future condition upon my present conduct ? And so on. And sound instruction on these subjects would be imbibed with avidity, and with alacrity reduced to practice. But alas, the fact is entirely otherwise. We are an apostate, fallen race ; by nature "dead in trespasses and sins." We take this world for the exclusive object of our regard, the portion and happiness of our souls. And reason, even from its first dawning, is turned away from God and all the sublime concerns of eternity, to subserve the gratification of our appetites and passions. Prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward, we disrelish the teachings of moral and heavenly wisdom ; and turn from them, with all practicable speed to the syren song of earthly pleasure. The thoughts of God, of his injunctions, and his judgments, disturb us in our chosen career after worldly objects ; and therefore, when they present themselves in our way, we fight and banish them as effectually as possible. Thus transgressors go on, hardening themselves in iniquity and ungodliness ; and plunging themselves, by thousands and millions, into that gulph of perdition where moral renovation never takes place, and where the voice of mercy is heard no more forever.

Now, taking for granted, as I do, that the bible is the word and the truth of God ; let us suppose that the sinner is

arrested in his course, and some of the plainest doctrines of scripture respecting his situation are powerfully brought home to his bosom. Suppose him to realize the awful facts, that he is in the hands and under the law of a most holy and almighty God ; that he is a rebel against that greatest and best of Beings, and has been rebelling against him with a mad and daring hardihood all his days ; that the anger of God burns against him ; and that he stands on the slippery precipice of destruction, exposed every moment to be thrust down into that dreadful hell “ where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.” Can a mortal be brought to this pass, without feelings of strong agitation, without shuddering with dread of the righteous vengeance of Jehovah ? And if we see in his countenance, and hear from his lips, the evidences of this state of terror ; can any effect whatever be more rationally accounted for by reference to its cause than this ? I admit, indeed, that the fear of the wrath of God is not, strictly speaking, religion. But I place it at the commencement of religious experience in general, because it is the native and proper result of important scriptural truths impressed upon the mind ; and because, ordinarily at least, it is introductory to the glorious work of reconciliation and peace with God. It is in itself, most fit and suitable that a sinner should lay his condition deeply to heart, should tremble at the thoughts of meeting his offended Sovereign and Judge, and should thus be prompted to seek, with all speed and earnestness, some way of escape from the impending danger. Just about the time when the giddy world, and, it may be, some blind professors of Christianity too, are pronouncing of the subject of these convictions and alarms that he is going out of his senses, he is indeed, like the poor prodigal, “ coming to himself,” out of a long spiritual derangement. He is awaking out of that profound lethargy which threatened to issue in the horrors of eternal death. You say, the man was very decent, very moral in his deportment ; and what need is there of all this distress and solicitude ? He was gay and contented ; whence and why these tears of anguish, these cries of lamentation, this load of affliction which bows his spirit down to the earth ? I answer, he is discerning and applying to his conscience the holy law of God, in a manner in which you never saw or applied it to yours. The arrows of the Almighty, which you have never felt, are piercing his inmost soul. Upon the conscious discovery of his true position, he can no longer be easy and satisfied. Seeing the sword of divine justice suspended over him, he can no longer be so mad as to pursue the vain amusements which he

loved before. The world and all its pomps and splendors fade before the eye that is intensely seeking deliverance from eternal condemnation. I call upon you rather to commiserate than to scoff at such well founded anxiety. And remember also, for your own sake, that he is probably much nearer to the kingdom of salvation than you who never have been constrained to smite upon your breast, with heart-rending sorrow, and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Suppose the sinner, advancing in his discoveries, to have become convinced that no merits nor exertions of his own, nor of all mankind, could they be brought into operation for him, can in the smallest degree atone for his sins, nor bring him into true obedience and conformity to the will of God. Suppose him to perceive most clearly, that he must justly sink into utter ruin, unless he be both justified and sanctified; and at the same time that he is completely destitute of all means for the accomplishment of either of these indispensable objects. What are the feelings which such views will produce? Evidently those of overwhelming disconsolation, perfect self-despair, and a cordial loathing of the pleasures of this world? And ought he not to be so affected? If the bible be true, every unregenerate soul is lying thus helpless and defenceless before the bar of God, exposed continually to the stroke of his utmost indignation, whether the truth of the case be realized or not. If it is right to feel any thing, it is right to feel emphatically in regard to ~~the~~ interests of an immortal duration. To be cool and unconcerned here is phrensy. And of all the feelings that ever occupied the heart of man, there is none more reasonable than that of a sinner's self despair and lowliest prostration before the throne of that God who is "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity," and who cannot but be "angry with the wicked every day."

But let us proceed. Suppose now, that the blessed Spirit of God, the great Transformer and Comforter, leads this guilty sinner, this mourner, whose wounds no earthly balm can heal, to the foot of the Redeemer's cross; shows him something of the glory of his character as the Son of God, and of his amazing compassion in dying for a lost world; his ability and willingness to "save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him," however vast their corruptions and their guilt may have been; and sweetly draws and enables him to commit his soul to the open arms of this Saviour. Do you forbid the rescued captive of sin and heir of hell to rejoice and be glad in the exercise of this confidence in the adorable Immanuel? Do you require him, under pain of being censured as a wild enthusiast, to receive peace with

God, and the hope of a blissful immortality, the purchase of his Redeemer's blood, as coolly as you go about your most uninteresting business, or hum over your unfelt, pharisaic prayers?

“ O ye cold-hearted, frozen formalists,
On such a theme 'tis impious to be calm ;
Passion is reason, transport, temper here.”

Yes ; there is joy in Heaven when the wandering rebel is brought back to the family of God. And well may the restored rebel himself rejoice, and shout for gladness of heart, and sing the new song of praise to the Friend of Sinners, and with glowing zeal recommend him to all who are perishing in their evil ways. Every one who tastes the love of Jesus Christ knows that there is no danger, no possibility of loving him too much. Thou Divine Philanthropist, thou “ Lamb of God, who takest away our sins,” let it be our grief that we love thee so far less than we ought to do ; until we arrive at that world where our love shall be perfect in its degree, and uninterrupted in its continuance forever. Yet even then, we shall be evermore at an infinite distance from a full discharge of our debt of love to thee.

The disciple of Christ finds also in his experience that his heart is drawn to the people of God with a new and ardent affection. His benevolence and active kindness to all men are, indeed, much improved by the love of Christ shed abroad in his soul : but the servants of God appear to him as “ the excellent of the earth, in whom is all his delight.” Beyond all that humanity and natural sympathy can produce, he loves his fellow christians “ with a pure heart fervently,” and seeks to promote their welfare at the cost of great self-denial and large sacrifices. And is not all this love most reasonable ? Do not Christians reflect, before each other, the heavenly image of that God, and that Saviour, to whom their hearts are supremely devoted ? Ought not their common pursuit of a glorious immortality, their common dangers and trials, their common hope beyond the grave, and above all, their common union with Him who “ loved them and gave himself for them,” to bind them together in ties of endearing attachment far above all earthly friendships ? It must be admitted, I think, if causes are allowed to produce their genuine effects.

Let us take one sketch more. The watchful, diligent christian speaks, at proper times, and in proper companies, of the sacred pleasures which he experiences in communion with God. He goes to God in prayer, and in other divine

ordinances, as to his Father in heaven, his Portion, and his exceeding joy. His soul is refreshed, sometimes transported, by that intercourse of love which passes between him and the God whom he worships. They who are content to grovel upon the earth know not the meaning of these pure and elevated delights, these anticipations of everlasting felicity. Is it not then, at first blush, high presumption and folly in them to pronounce all these things mere fancy and enthusiasm? If we are called by the Word of God to "come and taste that he is good;" if there is a way in which the humble soul may cast his burdens and his cares upon an Almighty arm, may commit himself and his immortal all to his God who is unchangeably faithful; if he is warranted to exercise the claim which sovereign grace has given him to an interest in all the infinite perfections of Jehovah; what is there in the universe in which it is reasonable to rejoice, if not in such privileges as these? You are glad when your projects about temporal things prove successful; you delight in converse with poor, imperfect mortal friends; you boast of your wealth and greatness in acquisitions which are to "perish with the using;" and shall not the child of heaven "glory in the God of his salvation?" Yes, verily. But the christian sometimes mourns under what he calls "the hidings of the divine countenance from him." You observe his sadness, and talk of imaginary glooms, hypochondria, and what not. But alas! his sorrow is real, and can be most rationally accounted for. He has forgotten his duty, undervalued his privilege of drawing nigh to God, and wandered from him in the ensnaring paths of transgression. In wisdom and mercy, God is chastising him for a time with reserve and distance. The heavenly communication, the bible, seems to him now as a sealed book; he cannot appropriate, as he formerly did, its promises and its consolations. The throne of grace appears far above him, and almost wholly inaccessible. Abashed by a sense of his shameful and hateful backslidings, he cannot now pour out his soul into the bosom of his God with the delightful confidence of being accepted and blessed. Therefore it is that his soul is disquieted within him. And is not this a much better reason for sorrow than any earthly calamity can be? You lament abundantly when your worldly hopes are disappointed, or your beloved objects taken away; and shall it be counted nonsense and distraction when the returning backslider bewails the loss of his truest peace, and mourns an absent God?

To condemn religious experience, because it is often counterfeited by hypocrisy, and often mistaken by ignorance, is

just as absurd as to cry down every other good thing that is liable to be spuriously imitated. And what good thing shall we then have left? What will become of all the tender charities of social life? What will become of the noble love of liberty and of our country?

They who discard experimental religion, make the precious gospel, so far as in them lies, an empty and a useless theory. Its very purpose is to operate, first upon the heart, and consequentially upon the life of man. It cannot sanctify us in any other way. It is experimental religion alone that can raise us from the ruins of sin, and qualify us for the employments and happiness of heaven. Our nature is deeply diseased with sin; and the remedy must be effectually applied, or the cure will be impossible. What would you think of a man dangerously ill, and professing to wish for health, who looked at the medicine sent him, talked much and well of it, but utterly refused to let it be administered to him? You would loudly condemn his folly, and easily predict his fate.

MELANCTHON.

For the Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine.

REMARKS ON HUME'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

Few books are more generally read by people of education in the United States than Hume's history of England. Hume was possessed of such distinguished talents, has so much historical merit, and occupies such an important field in that department of literature, that he bids fair to be long a standard book in our language; and yet, he is the subject of some important defects, against which his readers cannot be too faithfully cautioned.—There are two things in particular, which make Hume's history of England dangerous to the American reader; he is an enemy to republican liberty, and an enemy to religion. Considering that Mr. Hume is a philosopher, he generally treats the superstitions of popery with great forbearance and even complaisance. For freethinkers, whenever he meets with them, he makes the best apologies in his power. But against the puritans and other disciples of the Genevan School, he lets loose all the venom of his pen. His attacks on this class of christians, is characterised by a degree of insidiousness and artifice unworthy of a man of talents. He often misrepresents their motives; he holds them up to ridicule by detailing their queer and uncouth expressions,

and in order to excite a general odium, he frequently sets down the crimes of a few individuals to the account of the whole fraternity. When he deals with prominent characters, he exhibits their faults with the whole force of his eloquence, whilst their virtues are either passed in silence, or deformed by detraction. This mode of writing, is very unfavorable to truth; it prevents our discovering what the disciples of Geneva have done for producing the present state of things, both in Britain and America; but Mr. Hume passed it off with the more plausibility, as his calumnies were supported by the whole weight of court influence, during the reign of the Stuarts; a length of time sufficient to give them something like the authority of prescription.

But one of the most unmanageable characters with whom Hume seems to have met, was the celebrated John Knox. All our respect for the talents of this historian, could hardly keep us from being diverted with his complaint in behalf of Mary Queen of Scots, against this apostle of the reformation in Scotland. John Knox it seems, was rather an unpolished man. He felt but little respect for the errors and vices of a royal personage. He was a man of uncourteous phrase, and when admitted to the drawing room of such a princess as Mary, was rather an ungracious inmate. Now to understand all this the better, let us enquire a little who was Mary queen of Scots? and who was John Knox? Mary was no doubt in many respects, a most accomplished and fascinating princess. She had however, been educated in the court of France; the great seat of refinement, gallantry and pleasure—in other words, in the most profligate and voluptuous court in Europe, when the superstitions and indulgencies of popery, operated as a hot bed to fructify the vices, and to annihilate all the principles of morality and religion.—Whatever apology Mary may derive from her situation, her subsequent conduct shews that she had drunk too deeply of that cup of pleasure which was poisoning the French metropolis. She was, however, a zealous devotee of the Roman Catholic church. She had her masses, crucifixes, and confessors in abundance. But under this mask of religion, she had her swarms of fiddlers and dancers, and all the apparatus of fashionable dissipation and corruption with which the French capital abounded. John Knox, on the other hand, was warm from the feet of Calvin, burning with the zeal and animated with the courage of an apostle. He had long witnessed and lamented the abuses and usurpations of popery; he had seen the piety and morality of the gospel buried under a cloud of unmeaning rites, or converted into a

lucrative traffic by the Papal See. To reform these abuses, and to give to his country the christian religion in its purity, was the object of his life; and an object for the accomplishment of which he would have held his life as a cheap sacrifice. Between such a princess and such a reformer, what common sentiment could exist? What amicable conference could they hold, or who could expect that their altercations should be free from severity? But had this intrepid minister of Christ changed his conduct; had he become the smooth-tongued courtier, or the cringing sycophant, in the presence of his queen; with what indignant sarcasm would the eloquent historian have trampled on his pusillanimity instead of reviling his audacity—But let it be remembered that, under the divine blessing, Knox succeeded in his momentous enterprise. Without the advantages of wealth or high birth, aided by his eloquence, and relying on the goodness of his cause, he stemmed the torrent of opposition, and became the honored instrument of heaven in completing the reformation in Scotland. This reformation has been the principal cause of raising Scotland to that distinguished eminence of morals, science, and felicity, which she at present occupies; and Hume himself is indebted to Knox for that light of science, which developed his powers, and gave him his high standing as the historian of his country. One well attested fact strongly illustrates the importance of the Scots reformation.

Previous to that event, the lower orders in Scotland were perhaps more profligate than those of England; since that time, the number of her criminals, in proportion to her population, are but as one to twelve to those of England; and even England is improving in this respect since her reformation. This change, so far as human means are considered, must be ascribed to the labors of John Knox; a degree of merit which might induce his countrymen to forgive his uncourteous manners, if they could not approve them; and which the historian of that day ought to have mentioned in connexion with the many faults he has thought proper to affix to his name.

Let us next enquire, to what merit the Puritans are generally entitled. Coming from the school of Calvin, and from the nature of their ecclesiastical government, they were essentially republican.* They had not carried out their ideas of religious liberty to the extent so happily exemplified at present in this country, but they certainly laid the foundation

* See this truth judiciously enforced in a pamphlet by the Rev. John H. Rice, of Richmond, which we hope to see generally circulated.

of the superstructure which has since been completed in the United States. Mr. Hume acknowledges that during the latter years of Elizabeth, when the royal prerogative was raised to the most formidable height, these Puritans were the only people who kept alive any thing like the spirit of liberty. At a subsequent period they shook the throne of the Stuarts, and kindled that flame of liberty which ultimately expelled that domineering and arbitrary family. To these people we are indebted for the English revolution, which perfected that system of jurisprudence from which we have borrowed so largely, and which gave to the representative principle that consideration and improvement which prepared it for becoming the foundation of all our civil institutions. That such a people should be calumniated in Britain, where their experiments were less successful, was more to be expected ; but we trust that the U. States, which has enjoyed the full harvest of their labors and sufferings, will know better how to appreciate their services. These are the people, however, whom Mr. Hume wished to overwhelm with contempt, and to banish from his country ; and in their place he would have filled that country with *philosophers* from his own school. Not with scientific philosophers ; but with such as France abounded in, from the cobbler's stall up to the princely hotel, previous to her revolution. How much he would have benefitted mankind by such a change, may be determined by comparing and contrasting the principal features in the English revolution, in the time of Charles the First, conducted by the disciples of Calvin, and the French revolution, conducted by the disciples of Hume and Voltaire. This comparison, if pursued into its details, might be very instructive, as it would exhibit men of different religious impressions, acting in scenes, which awakened all the passions of the human mind, and afford an opportunity of remarking the result. On this subject, however, we shall attempt but a few observations.

Between the two revolutions just mentioned, there are many strong points of resemblance. Each of those revolutions, in its turn, filled Europe with consternation. Each of them occasioned the death of a Monarch ; made abortive efforts to establish a republic ; sunk into military despotism ; and ultimately rendered back the respective nations to the regal sceptres of those families so ignominiously expelled. So far the representation is complete ; but the points of dissimilarity are no less obvious and striking. The force of the English revolution was directed against Charles the First. This Monarch had labored for years to establish absolute authority, and destroy the liberties of his people ; when resisted, he

waged a long and bloody war against his subjects ; and when finally overcome, he was seized and led to the scaffold by the faction of a usurper, contrary to the wishes of the nation.—Lewis the Sixteenth met the discontents of his people in the spirit of concession. He summoned the wisdom of the nation to devise expedients for lightening the burdens of the state. He consented to change the absolute government of France into a constitution comprising as much liberty as the name of monarchy would admit. This conduct might have disarmed resentment, and yet his execution was singularly cruel. Not to mention other indignities, when on the scaffold and about to exercise a privilege granted from time immemorial, to the worst of criminals—that of addressing the spectators ; his voice was suddenly drowned by the thunder of drums and artillery, and the order given for his immediate decapitation. During the civil commotions of England, many of the nobility and gentry espoused neither party ; they retired to their estates, and quietly waited the issue of the contest without molestation. In France the utmost ingenuity of tergiversation was often insufficient for the preservation of life. Power was every day shifting from faction to faction. Those who did not satisfy the present rulers by the warmest professions of loyalty and civism, incurred their suspicion ; and those who did, incurred the resentment of their successors. In England, as has been common in all similar revolutions, the republican party continued united until the common danger was dissipated. When the revolutionary war was terminated, then, indeed, factions arose, and a scramble for power commenced, which defeated the object of the revolution itself. In France, so violent were the principles of discord, and so unfit the actors for any form of government, that whilst the most formidable armies in Europe were hovering on the frontiers, the factious in Paris were drilling the mobs, and waging incessant wars against one another. The machinations of ambition knew no pause. These men were able to falsify the old maxim, “that a powerful enemy could unite all whom he threatened.” The crown was no sooner hurled from the head of Lewis, than every demagogue seemed to view it as a prize at which he might aim, but to which he must wade through the blood of his competitors. And hence the French revolution was from first to last, a sea of blood, which seems to stand without a parallel in the annals of human nature. In England, proscriptions and executions were not frequent, and were generally confined to characters of rank and influence. In France, the rage of faction was let loose on the lowest of the people,

and produced the most extensive scenes of indiscriminate and wanton slaughter. Such are the outlines of the difference between two great revolutions, the one conducted, by what some have termed religious enthusiasts ; the other, by atheists. That the French revolution failed in the establishment of republicanism, may be variously accounted for ; but its sanguinary excesses can be ascribed to nothing but the infidelity of the times. In this respect, it has left the world an awful lesson, and no people are more interested in reading that lesson aright, than the people of the United States. C.

THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION VINDICATED FROM THE CHARGE
OF BEING HOSTILE TO KNOWLEDGE.

[□ The present number is designed merely to open the subject and awaken inquiry—a more detailed investigation will be given in the next by another hand.—After which, the writer of this article proposes briefly to consider the necessity of a better system of instruction in a moral, political, as well as religious view.]

‘Also, that the soul be without knowledge, it is not good.’ Prov. 19 v. 2.

Before proceeding on this interesting subject, the author avails himself of the opportunity of disclaiming for himself, and he believes he might take the same liberty for those with whom he has the honor to be accidentally associated as a causal contributor, any intention of becoming either the enemy or the advocate of particular sects of religion or systems of instruction. He aspires to no more than to be the fellow laborer of more illustrious associates in the vineyard of christianity and of learning. He claims friendship with all who are engaged in the same holy undertaking, and professes enmity only to infidelity and ignorance.

The Pseudo-philosophers, of the age which has just passed away, have represented the christian religion, not merely as irreconcileable in its doctrines, but as hostile in its spirit with true knowledge. Whatever plausibility the violence of misguided fanatics in early times may have given to this dangerous delusion, there cannot be a proposition more utterly false and unfounded. And so far from admitting that ignorance is any where inculcated or knowledge forbidden in the bible, we maintain that it is full of exhortations and even injunctions on us to be wise—To be wise not only in the practice of our immediate duties to God, but in the comprehensive

sense of the word, to understand every thing proper for our temporal felicity as well as for our eternal glory. We go still farther, and assert that no one is capable of embracing in the full extent of its excellence and beauty, the divine system developed in the gospel without much previous preparation, either of reading or reflection. Matters of doctrine and faith essential to individual salvation, are to be sure, levelled to the comprehension of every capacity, however mean. But the christian religion has ethical, social, and political perfections, which can be fully appreciated by those only, who have often and deeply contemplated the sublimer principles of the moral and even of the physical world. And unquestionably, none but a highly cultivated understanding is capable of fully perceiving the awful beauty and magnificence of the oriental poetry, which is so remarkable in the simple and pregnant sentences of Isaiah and of Job.

They who have arraigned our religion as adverse to knowledge, rely entirely for the support of their mischievous error, on a few detached historical facts. We scorn to plead to the jurisdiction of any rational tribunal to which they choose to carry the controversy. We are willing to rest the issue on the evidence of history—not the history of a province, or of a day, but of empires and of ages. We appeal from the sentences which have devoted martyrs to the flames, to the ages and generations which have wept over their persecutors.

We will not deny that the christian religion, like every other, has been occasionally polluted by bigots; but even that bigotry may for any thing we know, have been converted by providence into purposes of benevolence. The eruptions of Vesuvius have laid waste some of the most fertile vales of Italy, but as has been beautifully remarked, “on the lava and ashes, and squalid *scoriae*, of old eruptions, grow the peaceful olive, the cheering vine, and the sustaining corn.”—However this may be, it is enough for our purposes, that the very objects for which philosophers were in early ages denounced, have supported instead of undermining our religion. The zealots who persecuted Galileo, little knew the novel arguments to fortify the existence and wisdom of the Divinity, which were to be derived from his splendid discoveries. They who trembled at the first dawn of intellectual light, which cheered the gloom of the thirteenth century, little imagined that it was the aurora which announced the rising of a benignant and invigorating sun to the christian world. That it was the breaking of that day, which was not only to drive the spectres of superstition from the earth, but was to be

distinguished by the purest piety, the most refined morality, the most exalted attainments which it is the province of history to record. The era of the Bedes, the Luthers, the Calvins, the Hookers, the Taylors, the Miltons, the Bacons, the Newtons, the Fenelons, the Howards of the world. The era, which in defiance of many bad men who have risen like exhalations from the earth, and been instruments for inflicting the angry dispensations of providence upon a guilty world, we maintain has been that, in which the human race has made the most sensible progress in practical morality, and in rational piety, as well as in general knowledge. At no time perhaps since the fall of Adam, has the banner of God been so triumphantly displayed among his creatures; at no time has the christian church been so crowded with genuine votaries, who have brought to the altar of their Creator, and their Saviour, not the incense of precious gums, but hearts softened to the impression of every sacred, of every tender affection.

But our adversaries will array against us the wars and devastations of Europe. If however, we compare the most sanguinary modern conquests with the desolation of the ancients, we shall find that even war itself has lost some of its evils under the salutary influence of christianity. It was the pride and glory of ancient chieftains, to devastate and pillage countries—to put nations to the sword—to erase cities—sparing only captives enough to adorn their triumphs. The less enlightened nations of the north, had not even this savage ambition. They spared no victims. These were not the principles of antiquity alone. The Mahomedans yet practise them; Genghis Kan, and Tamerlane, have more recently surpassed if possible, their predecessors in crime. The first is said seriously to have contemplated the stupendous cruelty of depopulating the vast territory he had conquered, to fatten the fields for pasture. To these remorseless sentiments, we shall seek in vain for any parallel in the most vindictive wars of modern Europe. Even that man of destiny, whose triumphs and reverses France yet mourns, was constrained by the opinions of mankind, if not by the suggestions of a gloomy and wrathful imagination, to spare those whom he had conquered.

Nor should it be overlooked that the comforts of life were never so generally diffused, as during the period of which we are writing. This is because, not only the different orders of society, but even the most distant and hostile nations, have by the genial influence of christianity been for some purposes blended into one great family. The mass of human misery,

has from this circumstance been very much diminished in proportion to the actual population. The relief of the poor has now in some countries become a standing object of national benevolence. With individuals, charity has become not a homely duty, but an object of emulation and even of ambition. It is so captivating a distinction, that we love to dwell upon the memory of those who by benevolence alone have acquired a species of renown. Such are Howard and Wilberforce of England ; such that excellent man *** *** of our own country ; such the various missionaries who are now exploring the wildernesses of creation, and perishing among savages that they may teach them to be humane. What Mr. Burke has said with inimitable eloquence of one of these benefactors of mankind, may now be applied to many. " He has visited all Europe, not to survey the sumptuousness of palaces, or the stateliness of temples ; not to make accurate measurements of the remains of ancient grandeur, nor to form a scale of the curiosity of modern art ; not to collect medals, or collate manuscripts ; but to dive into the depths of dungeons ; to plunge into the infection of hospitals ; to survey the mansions of pain and sorrow ; to take the gage and dimensions of misery, depression, and contempt ; to remember the forgotten ; to attend to the neglected ; to visit the forsaken ; and to compare and collate the distresses of all men in all countries."

This great scheme for mitigating the condition of mankind, this circumnavigation of charity, was not the suggestion of a narrow, nor of an ignorant mind. It was, if we may be allowed the expression, one of the happy revelations of genius, like that which led Columbus to explore the wasteful deep for this new world. Is it not then manifest, that God has given us not only a soul to imbibe his grace, as the flowers blossom under the dews of heaven ; not only eyes to guide us by the light of the stars which he has fixed in the azure vault ; but he has endowed us with faculties capable of comprehending, in some degree at least, far short of perfection to be sure, the order and beauty of creation, and of directing us through the labyrinths of error which would else perplex and confound us. He has not merely endowed us with these faculties, but has ordained for them, as he has for our bodies, a particular mode and order for their developement : and we shall no more become wise without labouring to be so, than we shall become strong by laziness, or fat by famine. These faculties it is the part of education to expound and strengthen. Science, or Philosophy, or knowledge then, though branded like the rebellious angels by their apostacy and fall, are the

great instruments with which God has armed us to struggle against the physical and many of the moral evils inseparable from our mortal condition. With them man has contended against calamity designed no doubt to try his strength and fortify his courage. His victories have often been glorious. It has been well observed by a living philosopher, that when the standing armies of Europe in conjunction with other causes threatened to arrest the progress of population, and thus virtually repeal the law that we should increase and multiply—innoculation for the small pox was discovered: and again, when the military conscriptions threatened a still greater evil, vaccination was introduced. Thus we see man laboring with the proper instrument with which God has armed him, the mind, to repair the injuries of misgovernment, and arrest the ravages of nature; and thus binding up the wounds which are opened as a chastisement to our guilt. It is a fine subject for moral reflection to observe how this subtle agent, which sometimes jars, will at others restore the harmony of the system. Though it may now explode as a mine of gunpowder beneath our feet, it will at another time remove some cumbrous obstruction. It is skill, it is education only which can control it, and make all its combustions beneficial: and the people who will not take the best means for doing this, are even more inexcusable than the unfortunate man who went about the Magazines of Brandywine with a torch in his hand and blew himself and his companions into the other world.

Let not the ignorant and presumptuous infidel believe that these reflections which naturally arise from the most superficial knowledge of profane history, could have escaped the inspired men who composed the book of our salvation. Let him not in the spirit of an insolent scepticism wish to catechise the Prophets on their knowledge of modern discoveries. They were inspired, and needed not the aid of human instruction—But Moses, who had seen the face of God, and grew bright at the vision; Isaiah, whose lips the angel touched with hallowed fire; the Apostles who had communed with the pure intelligence, the being who was wise without being taught; could never have designed to inculcate the insolence of affecting the same inspiration, or of pretending to be informed by any other means than those which God has ordained. To despise learning, is not merely to be a fool—it is worse—it is a pitiful, and contemptible, and even infidel renunciation of the best privilege which God has given man over brutes. If we cannot, then, sing a *requiem* to ignorance, let us, at least, have no more anthems in its praise. When

involuntary and unavoidable, it is a proper subject for our compassion, but for every thing in our power which would have made us substantially wiser; that we have omitted to learn, without learning something more valuable in its place, we have fallen just so far short of the most obvious purposes of our creation. And he who voluntarily excludes from his mind the useful and beautiful truths which God has put within his reach, should be considered nearly as perverse as if he should put out his eyes because he can grope like a beast without them.

However, congenial ignorance may be therefore with Atheism and infidelity, it is utterly at war with the principles and spirit, and even the solemn admonitions of our religion. To prove this by quotations would be endless. The chapter from which I have already taken a verse, will furnish evidence enough.

“ The foolishness of man preventeth his way ; and his heart fretteth against the Lord ! ” v. 3.

“ Hear counsel, and receive instruction, that thou mayest be wise in thy latter end.” v. 20.

The argument however derived from experience, is susceptible of still farther illustration from the lives and characters of learned men. It has been well said by Bacon, that a little philosophy will make one an atheist, but a good deal will bring him back to the true faith. We should not fear the consequences which would result from having the faith of all the followers of this illustrious father of modern science fairly examined. We are certain that the religion which has raised and inspired the genius of such men as have contributed to establish and diffuse *our religion*, can have nothing to dread from true philosophy—but every thing to apprehend from superficial, conceited, presumptuous impostors, who think that they can be wise without the trouble of learning to be so, and who imagine themselves good because they have not intelligence enough to know how complicated and difficult the duties of a rational creature are.

Perhaps it is the worst mischief which the metaphysical mysticism, and sophistry of some persons in the last century did, to cast such an odium on science by the abuse of its most obvious principles, as to give some colour of plausibility to the hostility which many amiable persons now avow, and more lazy ones affect towards learning. We would wish to look beyond the dim twilight of these moon-struck visionaries, to the great minds which preceded them. And we

especially invite the attention of our young friends to the study and habitual contemplation of those lights of the world—the early writers. There is something so heroic in their long devotion to study; something so lofty and disinterested in their voluntary, and even courted seclusion; something so amiable in the gentleness and piety of their lives; so deep and pathetic in their moral reflections; so truly magnificent and oriental, in the brightness with which their imaginations ray out, and paint their colors like the sun in a rainbow, that no one can rise from a page of Taylor, Barrow, or above all Hooker, without moral, religious and intellectual improvement.

Nor are these fascinations of knowledge confined to sacred subjects. How many affecting topics of consolation in misfortune, can we learn from the facetious discourses of Socrates, or the amiable and pathetic philosophy of Cicero? We approve also, the labours of those who have with benevolent intentions explored the laws of the universe,—who have mounted with Milton to the head of that high argument, and justified the ways of God and man. It was said of Socrates that he first brought the sciences from the heavens to the level of man. But that heaven has fallen and vanished with the visions which created it—and I would now fain aspire to raise science again to the heavens.

We hope to be excused in this crisis of the contested importance of learning for raising our voice feeble as it is, in what we consider the cause of morality, of virtue, of religion, of human nature, and of all that is captivating, or decorous in life. It is the first time in a christian commonwealth where there is neither the rack nor the inquisition, that the advantages of education have been disputed. And we may now fairly retort the charge which infidelity has brought against our religion. For in vindicating the cause of science, we find ourselves in opposition to those only, who are inimical to christianity, as well as to knowledge. A race of creatures who incapable of deriving pleasure from contemplating the achievements of the departed heroes who have preceded us, and conscious of having nothing worthy in their own characters to be transmitted to posterity, are for sullying the stream which has brought the memory of ancient greatness fresh to our times, and for obstructing the current which will waft their own names to an everlasting oblivion. But ignorance has no weapons with which to combat knowledge: we have only to improve our system of instruction, and the noisy idlers who infest us, will vanish like evil spirits before the Eastern Star.

A PROVINCIAL PROTESTANT.

ADDRESS TO THE SOCIETY, &c.

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For the Virginia Religious and Literary Magazine.

It may not be uninteresting to the friends of piety and virtue to learn that the Theological Students at Hampden Sidney have recently instituted "A Society of Inquiry on Missions." It is the primary object of this Society to gain as accurate and extensive information as possible respecting the state of morals and religion, principally, though not exclusively, in our own country; and the exertions of Missionaries for the promotion of vital christianity. To those who believe that the sword of the Spirit will be most victorious when wielded by the able Ministers of the New Testament, it must be gratifying to learn that the Spirit of Missions is increasing in our Theological Seminaries. It is certainly important that the probationers for the sacred office should be familiarized, as much as possible, with the arduous service in which the most vigorous employment of all their talents will soon be required. Precepts are, in this case, useful, but not sufficient. They unfold the nature of the duty to be performed; but example demonstrates its practicability.

The Society is composed of those Students who are preparing for the Ministry, whether they are engaged in their literary or theological studies. And any respectable Preacher of the Gospel who will attend the stated meetings may become a member. The meetings are held on the first Monday in every month, at 2 o'clock, P. M. during the sessions of College. After the introductory exercises of each meeting, which are prayer, and the reading of a portion of scripture relative to the prosperity of the Messiah's kingdom; an Address, appropriate to the design of the Society, is delivered by the President or Vice-President. Each member then communicates whatever religious intelligence of an interesting character, he has received since the previous meeting. Two members, also, who have been previously appointed, read to the Society essays illustrative of the state of morals and religion in some section of country, or narrative of some mission, domestic or foreign. In addition to these exercises, some subject relative to the Missionary cause is discussed by such of the members as think proper to express their sentiments. A correspondence has been instituted with several similar Societies, and Boards of Missions: it is already interesting, and will, it is presumed, be shortly, and very profitably enlarged.

With this brief notice of the Society is communicated the Address delivered by the President at the first meeting. PHILO-KALOS.]

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF INQUIRY ON MISSIONS.

The favorable auspices under which the Society takes its rise must, to its members, be a subject of mutual congratulation. The cordiality with which all appear to concur in the

principles that are to regulate its proceedings, may be regarded as an earnest of the unanimity and promptitude that will characterize their endeavors to attain its object. While they, who shall be appointed to any special service, will regard their ability as the only warranted measure of their duty, every individual will contribute, with pleasure, his private incidental acquisitions to the common fund. We may, therefore, entertain the hope that our success will bear a just proportion to our numbers, and to our means of gaining such intelligence as we desire.

If we consider attentively the object which we have proposed to ourselves, its attainment will be regarded as highly desirable. In proportion to the clearness and energy imparted by the christian system to our conceptions of the value of the human soul, will necessarily be the degree of our benevolence towards our fellow men. Rescued ourselves, as we trust, from ruin, and standing in happy security on the foundation laid in Sion, we cannot, without lively sentiments of compassion, see our brethren sinking in deep waters and perishing. Nor is it possible to entertain correct apprehensions of the Gospel of Christ, and not desire to know how far the energies of divine grace have subdued the depravity and removed the wretchedness of mankind.

The system of missions is not the device of man. It is of celestial origin. Before the foundations of the earth were laid, it formed a part of the counsels of Heaven. He who, rising from his throne, said, "Lo ! I come to do thy will, O God," was sent on a mission to this rebellious province of Jehovah's dominions. It was his design, not only to teach mankind the nature of the duty and their way of happiness ; but to make his soul an offering for sin, and introduce them into the favor and enjoyment of God. His personal ministry was confined to a particular region ; he laid, however, the foundation of an empire that shall extend over all the earth, and flourish while sun and moon endure. The commission which he gave to the Apostles and their successors, appears to have been founded on that which he had himself received : "As the Father sent me, even so do I send you. Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." This injunction, they who go forth in the spirit of their Lord, are disposed to regard in its full extent. And before the collective body of his ministers, in every age, he spreads a universal chart inscribed with his own words, *The Field is the WORLD.*

There is in christianity a powerful moralizing tendency, the effect of which is often seen in the character of many

persons who appear to remain destitute of its vital influence. To see even this result of that divine system is pleasing. But it is especially the evidence of its efficiency to enlighten the understanding ; to control the passions ; to sanctify the affections ; to prepare the whole man for a happy immortality, that we are desirous to see. When, however, we survey the moral and religious state of the world, eighteen centuries after the command to evangelize it, how afflictive is the general aspect that meets our view ! How extensive and palpable the darkness that shrouds the face of the earth ! How many nations are devoted to vain, debasing superstitions ; are spreading forth the hands to worship the host of heaven ; are exclaiming, with unhappy exultation, concerning a stock or a stone, *this is our God !* or by rites of impurity and blood are endeavoring to propitiate the powers of darkness that tyrannize over them ! In Christendom, where the Sun of Righteousness is rising to his noon, there are many millions that pay no attention to the Religion of Jesus Christ ; and of those that take to themselves his holy name, multitudes seem to have only the form, while they deny the power of Godliness. Besides the Aborigines, how many heathens are there in our highly favored country ! How many are within the range of our own observation, among our acquaintance, our friends, our relatives ! They will not, although they might, be happy. They shut their ears against the voice of divine mercy.—They turn away their eyes from the most impressive irradiations of the grace and glory of Immanuel. We already know enough to make our hearts bleed : but let us pursue our inquiries, and we may derive new accessions to our zeal and information, which may direct its exertions in future life.

Permit me, for a moment, to call your attention to the favorable signs of the times. That the Great Ruler of the world is about to accomplish, by the astonishing events of the present day, some important designs of mercy towards the church, is a sentiment neither singular nor unfounded. Although the progress of Religion in the world is inconsiderable, compared with what it might have been, had all its votaries abounded in those labors of love which it enjoins ; yet there is no ground for despondence ; nor is there time for fruitless lamentation. Where spiritual death reigns in its most awful forms, the returning rays of life and grace begin to attract and delight our eyes ; and we discover some indications of the presence and agency of the quickening Spirit. The genius of christianity is now in general, better understood, its benign principles more strongly influence the heart, and a greater number of those who enjoy its consolations are

devoted to the extension of its light and power. Very decisive are the evidences that He, who once lay a prisoner of death, in the tomb of Joseph, is now pursuing, with accelerated progress, his victories over the enemies of his cross.—No age since that of the Apostles has been so much distinguished as the present, for numerous and efficient exertions to diffuse the influence of pure and vital piety. What an amount of personal labor, what sacrifices of temporal gains, what a confluence of resources, what a union of hearts and combination of talents have the appeals of suffering humanity, and the claims of the Divine Honor commanded ! The Spirit of Christendom is awake ; her eye is surveying the heathen nations, and unutterable feelings of solicitude for their salvation agitate her breast. But her zeal does not lose its fires in mere sensation. It prompts to vigorous action.—They who devote themselves to the Ministry of the heathen, are embarked, and while the sacred songs resound along the shore, and the blessing of Heaven is implored for their success,

Soft gales and gentle heavings of the wave
Impel the ship whose errand is to save,

That our own country will be a theatre on which the efforts of christian Philanthropy shall extend the influence of the gospel, and on which many imperishable monuments of divine grace shall be erected, is not I think, an improbable sentiment. To this delightful land were many of our forefathers guided by the hand of Heaven, as a refuge from that civil and religious domination which they were no longer able to endure. And it is thought by some judicious writers on the Apocalypse, that should the part of the Eastern world which was the seat of the four great monarchies, be visited by the just retributions of the Almighty, our country may again become an asylum of the afflicted saints, and enjoy without interruption the tokens of the divine regard.

It is worthy of particular remark that our increasing population is rapidly overspreading our vast and distant territories. But the means of grace do not in a proportion adequate to the number of the emigrants, accompany them. Unless the requisite attention be paid to the subject, how soon will every religious impression received by the firesides and in the churches of their fathers be entirely effaced, and the most gloomy moral desolation prevail over these fair and luxuriant portions of our land ! The numerous Indian tribes also, in a forlorn and languishing state, should not be forgotten ; should be cheered with the comforts of civilized life and

the hopes of a future and better state of being. The information which we may gain on these topics, may be interesting and useful not to ourselves only, but to others engaged in the same design.

Called as we believe, to that sacred office in which we shall be to many the savour of life unto life, or of death unto death; what knowledge and zeal, what fidelity and activity are necessary that we may discharge to divine acceptance, its momentous duties ! In this case of such singular importance, much greater aid may be derived from example than from precept. Let us, then, follow the Missionary from his paternal mansion, and all the comforts and charms of civilized life to the place of his destination. He is in perils by night and by day ; on the land and on the sea. He shrinks not from the chilling storms of the polar regions ; nor does he faint under the melting beams of the torrid zone. To him the indifference of heartless friends and the opposition of savage foes are alike. To him famine and nakedness are not unexpected calamities ; and he counts not his very life dear to himself, that he may testify the grace of God to man. While the fire of love glows in his heart, the glad tidings of salvation sound from his tongue, and the light of his example and doctrine is like the morning spread upon the mountains, and shines over the territories of pagan night. While in this institution we recount his labors and sufferings in the christian cause, shall we not inquire what we may do to promote that cause ? Will no generous ardour be awakened in our bosoms, to emulate his illustrious deeds ? Shall we not more unreservedly devote ourselves to the important work to which we are summoned ?

As a means of preparation for this service has this society been constituted ; and on this afternoon, while the united prayers of many thousands are ascending for the Divine blessing on the most holy and generous cause in the universe, we commence our inquiries on the subject of Missions. We may perhaps derive lasting advantage from this association ; its influence may be felt extensively and by several generations ; or it may decline and fall, on the dispersion of those who gave it being and form. Whatever may be its fate, the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper by means of his own appointment. Christianity is a Divine institution, and shall prevail. Jesus Christ is the Captain of Salvation ; and under his conduct the sacramental host of God's elect are carrying on an irreconcilable warfare against the powers of darkness. Heaven, earth and hell, are interested in the issue. Arduous is the conflict, and the success is sure. Immanuel

points to the crown of life ; whose motto is "win and wear it" ! He animates his followers by his own illustrious example ; and while they march under his banners, the volumes of his recorded triumphs shall increase through every age, until the splendor of millenial glory shall cover the earth, and all nations shall see the salvation of God.

Sentiments of our Forefathers.

In the second number of our Journal, some remarks were offered on the manner in which the American Revolution was conducted ; and on the result, at once so happy, and so different from that of any other recorded in history. The cause of this difference was ascribed to the religious character of the people, and of those who guided public sentiment, and managed the affairs of the people. Every opportunity of looking into the history of the time, and ascertaining the private feelings and sentiments of the actors in that great drama affords additional evidence of the correctness of our opinion.

It is much to be desired that some one possessing sufficient learning industry and piety, should write the history of the United States, beginning with the first settlement of the country, and not merely detailing historical facts, but tracing the operation of moral causes, and showing their influence in producing precisely that character and disposition which qualified our forefathers to act their part so honorably to themselves ; and so beneficially to the interests of their descendants, and, as we hope will ultimately appear, of the whole world. A work of this sort is the more necessary because errors prevail in reference to this subject, of very disastrous practical influence. We refer particularly to the sentiment that times and circumstances give to men their form and coloring ; and that great occasions not only call forth, but *create* talents suited to them. Hence a people has nothing to do but wait until occasion shall put forth its creative energies, and men will at once spring up perfectly suited to the times in all their qualifications and equipments, as Minerva is fabled to have issued a full armed goddess from the brain of Jupiter. The effects of this sentiment are in the highest degree disastrous ; because it checks all efforts to promote intellectual and moral improvement ; and encourages the debasing pursuit of present sensual gratifications. The falsehood and folly of the opinion are proved by all history. When has an age passed by in which there has not been a

call for such men as adorn the annals of our revolution ? When have the groans of suffering humanity been silenced ? In what age of the world has the tyrant ceased to wield his iron sceptre ; and the slave to clank his chains ? When have human beings not been bound in fetters of darkness, and made subservient to the humors and caprices, the follies and crimes of their fellow men ? But should it be thought that these questions do not exactly touch the case in point, we ask, how often has it happened that tyranny and oppression have goaded its subjects to a resistance, more resembling the violent and debilitating struggles of a man in the delirium of a fever, than the vigorous exertions of one sound both in mind and body, and directing his efforts to some attainable and beneficial object ? Why have not these occasions called forth such men as Washington, Hancock, and Henry ; and why have not these efforts resulted in the establishment of a government such as ours ? Why have the convulsions of the civilized world for the last twenty-five years subsided in the calm of despotism ? Why have they been terminated by the *Holy Alliance*, so named, but formed, there is reason to believe, for every purpose of unhallowed ambition ? We grant that any event creating a powerful interest in the minds of men, will probably call into exercise great talents ; and afford a theatre for their illustrious exhibition. Great virtues, too, if they exist, may, on such occasions, be displayed to the immortal honor of their possessors, and the lasting advantage of the people. And this is all that can with safety be affirmed on this subject. In other words, revolutionary times, when the bands of ancient government are dissolved, and its arm weakened, serve to discover with great precision, the intellectual and moral character of those among whom such events take place. If they are virtuous and wise, the consequences will be such as to gladden the heart of every philanthropist, and to diffuse the blessings of liberty, wholesome laws, and sound morals through the nation. But the character of a people is not suddenly formed. It is not the work of a single generation ; but rather the effect of causes partly physical, but chiefly moral, operating, almost imperceptibly, yet certainly, through the lapse of ages. Hence the value of well written history ; and hence the importance of investigating the causes, which combine their influences to form national character. A history of our country, in which a clear exposition should be made of all that had effect in preparing the people to go through the revolution ; and to frame and adopt such a form of government as that under which we have the happiness to live, would be one of the most

irstructive works that the wisdom of man ever produced for the improvement of the species. We would recommend this subject as a study, to such of our young countrymen as are not satisfied with the superficial acquirements of the day, nor with the poor diversions sought by the idle and unthinking to get rid of the burden of time. But we would forewarn them that they must look back into past ages; and into the religious, as well as the political and civil history of various countries; or they will assuredly fail of a due comprehension of the important subject.

In the mean time, as our researches, or the communications of our friends may enable us, we shall endeavor to bring our readers to an intimate acquaintance with the private sentiments, and feelings of the illustrious men whose labors and counsels achieved our independence, and laid the foundation of our national glory. In this number, we present three original documents, which we are sure will be read with deep interest, and by many with great pleasure. Two of these papers contain Resolves of the old Congress, bearing the signature of the venerable Charles Thomson. Whenever we mention that body of men, we cannot but lament our inability to do them justice. Their lofty spirit, their unyielding fortitude, their heroic devotion to the interests of their country, their wisdom, their prudence, their eloquence, raised them to the highest pinnacle of real greatness; and ensured to them the admiration of the world. But the brightest wreath in their crown of glory is the sincere and fervent piety, which they mingled with all the other elements of their greatness; and under the influences of which they bore themselves with a meekness and humility rarely witnessed in men entrusted with high power.

The first of these papers is a recommendation to the several States to observe a day of thanksgiving. The date will be seen below. We purposely forbear to detail the events of the period that our young readers may look into the history for themselves. The composition of the piece is admirable—the tone of deep and humble piety which pervades it, is truly edifying—and the wise regard paid to the best interests of the country is exemplary. We recommend every sentence to the diligent attention of the reader.

The second paper is exactly in the spirit of *puritanism*; and no doubt occasioned inextinguishable laughter among the circles in the purlieus of St. James's when it was published on the other side of the Atlantic. Nor has the sentiment which it expresses met with much favor among our plain republicans in the present day. And we have lately seen the

opinions of some sturdy royalists brought forward in opposition to doctrines similar to those taught in the Resolution of Congress. As far as authority goes, we are more prepared to deliver ourselves to the direction of these countrymen of ours, than to any that ever lived in the tide of times. No men have possessed keener discernment than they ; and none have been urged by stronger necessity to look well to the effects of prevailing sentiments and indulgencies.

The third paper is a private letter from Washington to Henry. It is published for the purpose of showing the pre-eminent patriotism of that first of men. Many have been prodigal of life, many have disregarded wealth, for the love of country ; but how few have had the fortitude to bear censure and endure reproach, for the sake of promoting the cause in which they were engaged. The love of glory is man's strongest passion. Washington underwent reproach that he might serve the interests of his country. He weakened himself to strengthen a rival, for the good of the service !

Such were our fathers. Under that gracious Providence on which they relied, they were able to sustain any trial, and brave any danger. They have left us a rich inheritance. Nor is their example the least boon which we have received from them. May their posterity have wisdom to imitate their conduct.

.....

IN CONGRESS, NOVEMBER 1, 1777.

Forasmuch as it is the indispensable duty of all men to adore the superintending providence of Almighty God ; to acknowledge with gratitude their obligation to him for benefits received, and to implore such further blessings as they stand in need of : And it having pleased him, in his abundant mercy, not only to continue to us the innumerable bounties of his common providence ; but also to smile upon us in the prosecution of a just and necessary war for the defence and establishment of our unalienable rights and liberties ; particularly, in that he hath been pleased, in so great a measure, to prosper the means used for the support of our troops, and to crown our arms with most signal success :

It is therefore recommended to the Legislative or Executive powers of these United States, To set apart Thursday, the eighteenth day of December next, for solemn thanksgiving and praise ; that, at one time, and with one voice, the good people may express the grateful feelings of their hearts, and consecrate themselves to the service of their divine benefactor ; and that, together with their sincere acknowledgments and offerings, they may join the penitent confession of their

manifold sins, whereby they had forfeited every favor, and their humble and earnest supplication, that it may please God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, mercifully to forgive and blot them out of remembrance ; that it may please him graciously to afford his blessing on the governments of these States, respectively, and prosper the public council of the whole ; to inspire our Commanders, both by land and sea, and all under them, with that wisdom and fortitude which may render them fit instruments, under the providence of Almighty God, to secure for these United States, the greatest of all human blessings, independence and peace : That it may please him to prosper the trade and manufactures of the people, and the labor of the husbandman, that our land may yet yield its increase ; to take schools and seminaries of education, so necessary for cultivating the principles of true liberty, virtue and piety, under his nurturing hand, and to prosper the means of religion for the promotion and enlargement of that kingdom, which consisteth "*in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.*"

And it is further recommended, That servile labor and such recreation as, though at other times innocent, may be unbecoming the purpose of this appointment, may be omitted on so solemn an occasion.

Extract from the Minutes.

CHA'S THOMSON, *Secretary.*

.....

IN CONGRESS, OCTOBER 12, 1778.

Whereas, true religion and good morals, are the only solid foundation of public liberty and happiness :

Resolved, That it be, and it is hereby earnestly recommended to the several States, to take the most effectual measures for the encouragement thereof, and for the suppressing of *theatrical entertainments*, horse-racing, gaming, and such other diversions as are productive of idleness, dissipation, and a general depravity of principles and manners.

Extract from the Minutes.

CHA'S THOMSON, *Secretary.*

.....

RICHMOND, APRIL 18th, 1818.

The foregoing are true copies from the original Resolutions filed among the Executive Communications to the General Assembly preserved in my office.

Wm. MUNFORD, *Keeper of the Rolls.*

*White Marsh, 12 miles from Philadelphia, }
November 13th, 1777. }*

DEAR SIR,—I shall beg leave to refer you to the letter which accompanies this, of equal date, for a general account of our situation and wants—My design in this, is only to inform you (and with great truth I can do it, however strange it may seem) that the army which I have had under my immediate command, has not, at any time since General Howe's trip up the Bay, and landing at Elk, been equal in point of numbers to his ; and, in asserting this, I do not confine myself to continental Troops only, but comprehend militia.

The disaffected, and luke warm in this state, of which unhappily there is a large proportion, taking advantage of the distraction in the form of government, prevented those vigorous exertions which were to have been expected of an invaded State ; and the short term for which their militia was drawn forth expiring before others could be got in, and before the Maryland militia (which by the bye were few in number and never joined till after the battle of Brandywine) came up, our numbers kept nearly at a stand : and I was left to fight two battles in order, if possible, to save Philadelphia, with less numbers than composed the army of my antagonist, whilst the world has magnified our army at least double his.

This idea, though mortifying in some points of view, I have been obliged to encourage, as, next to being strong, it is best to be thought so by the enemy ; and to this cause principally, I am to attribute the slow movements of General Howe.

How different the case in the Northern department ?—There the states of New York and New England resolving to crush Burgoyne, continued pouring in their troops till the surrender of that army, at which time not less than 14,000 militia were actually in General Gates' camp ; and composed, for the most part, of the best Yeomanry of the country—Had the same spirit pervaded the people of this, and the adjacent states, we might, before this, have had General Howe nearly in the situation of General Burgoyne ; with this difference, that the former would never have been out of reach of his shipping, while the other increased his danger every step he took ; having but one retreat in case of a defeat, and that blocked up by a respectable force.

My own difficulties in the course of the campaign have been, not a little increased by the extra aid of Continental troops, which the gloomy prospect of our Northern affairs (immediately after the reduction of Tyconderoga) induced me to spare from this army.—But it is hoped all will yet end well,—if the

cause therefore is promoted, indifferent to me, is it, in what quarter it happens.—The winter season, with the aid of our neighbors, may possibly, bring some important event to pass.—Sincerely and respectfully,

I am dear sir,

Your most ob't servant,

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

P. S. I shall be a little anxious till I hear this letter has got safe to your hands.

G. W.

For the Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine.

The supposition that the millenium is distant but about half a century from the present time, affords to christians the most agreeable prospects and speculations. On this supposition they contemplate our late religious institutions, our Missionary and Bible Societies, and our Sunday Schools as progressing every day in importance and efficacy, until the pleasing dawn which now seems to cheer our horizon, shall issue in the full day of Evangelical light and felicity. But the question presents itself, where shall the Church find pecuniary resources sufficient to carry these insfitutions to such perfection as the prospect before us would seem to require?—In whatever light we view this subject, a large amount of pecuniary contributions appears to be necessary. If Bibles and Missionaries are to be sent all over the world, whatever economy may be used in the management, a large expenditure will be indispensable in accomplishing the object. And where it is asked will the Church find resources for this expenditure? Some have supposed that revivals of religion in countries already denominated christian, would change the hearts of the wealthy and voluptuous; and that the revenues heretofore expended for the indulgence and promotion of vice, would be employed in the nobler purpose of spreading the gospel. Could this be effected even in a single nation, the Church would have ample means at her disposal—for never did any tyrant tax and fleece his slaves as vice every day taxes and fleeces her votaries: never did a despot draw such a revenue into his coffers, as vice is every day levying on his luxurious and dissipated children. And surely it is not presumption to hope that the progress of divine truth will induce many of the inhabitants of christian countries to divert a small part of that profusion which is now employed for the most injurious and ruinous purposes, to the advancement of

their own best interests, and the salvation of their fellow-creatures. But my most sanguine calculations are not founded on this hope. I think it probable that a great part of the heathen world will be christianized, before the profligate expenditures of nominal christians will be arrested—before these lovers of pleasure become lovers of God—The prophet Daniel assures us that whilst the great conflict and renovation is going on; whilst many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be encreased; the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. It is therefore perhaps, to the body of christians, such as we now find them, that we are to look for the principal contributions to be employed in the renovation of the world.

It is probable that christians will be excited to this effect by a more full understanding and belief of some parts of scripture at present not much attended to. I am persuaded the scriptures authorize the opinion that no man is impoverished by any religious contributions, within the bounds of prudence; but that on the other hand, to a certain extent, religious liberality is connected with temporal prosperity. And I apprehend a full belief of this doctrine would produce a joint effort in the christian world, attended with consequences not easily estimated. Let us for a few moments attend to the scripture doctrine on this subject. I shall not attempt to bring into view, all the passages, nor indeed any considerable proportion of the numerous passages of the sacred writings applicable to this point. The first I shall adduce is from Haggai, Ch. II. from the 14th to the 19th verse inclusive. The second from Malachi, Ch. III. from the 8th to the 12th verse inclusive. [See the places.]

These texts are too plain to need any comment. As the case related to the Jews they leave not a single doubt on the subject. They shew us plainly that religious parsimony is robbing God, and that religious liberality is intimately and certainly connected with temporal blessings. The only question which remains to be decided is whether these and similar texts apply to the present dispensation. In my opinion their application to the present times is evident from this consideration, that they do not relate to things ceremonial or typical, which were repealed with the Mosaic economy.

But a more satisfactory decision of the question may be taken from the Apostle Paul, 2 Cor. ch. IX. from the 6th verse to the 12th, inclusive. The Apostle is here encouraging the Corinthians to contribute for the relief of destitute and distressed christians; a liberality which he places on the same footing with contributions for the more immediate service of

God; and our best commentators are agreed that the idea of temporal remuneration is here as fully kept up as in the Old Testament passages: and indeed any interpretation which would exclude that idea, would strain the language so far and so unnecessarily, that it would hardly be proper to give it an answer.

There is another observation of considerable importance with relation to this subject, and that is, that the reward promised to religious liberality, seems to depend on the gift and not on the spirituality or piety of the motive, with which the gift is presented. This I think may be clearly evinced from the language of Malachi already quoted. "Prove me herewith saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of Heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room to receive it." The prophet here invites the Jews to prove the veracity of the divine promise, or to take that course which would give them a sensible demonstration of its faithfulness. Now on the supposition that the promise respected the external performance of the duty merely, this could easily be done—but if respect was also had to the piety of the motive with which the gift was presented, I cannot conceive how any proof could be made without the prerogative of judging the heart. I also believe, that many other parts of scripture could be adduced in favor of this opinion, but I shall confine myself at present to the remarkable prophecy respecting Nebuchadnezzar contained in Ezekiel, Ch. XXIX. from the 18th to the 20th verse inclusive. *Vide loc.*

This prophecy does not appear to have been intended for the instruction of Nebuchadnezzar. We have no evidence that he ever read it. It was not delivered till after the service in question was performed, though before the remuneration was awarded. The prophecy seems to be intended solely for the general instruction of the church. And I apprehend the instruction to be derived from it is plainly this, that God will reward every service he receives, but that external and spiritual services are to be distinguished, and will be rewarded in different ways—that external services are connected with temporal prosperity, and that spiritual services are rewarded with spiritual blessings.

But perhaps some may admit that among the Jews, temporal prosperity was the reward of religious liberality without respect to the motive—and that the promise of temporal remuneration, is continued under the gospel dispensation, who may yet suppose that the conditions of the promise are changed or that better motives are required in the present state of the church. Were this the case we should expect the change

in question, to be intimated in those passages which reiterate the promise in the New Testament. But this does not appear to be the fact. Paul in the address to the Corinthians already quoted, says nothing about motives, except that the gift be presented "not grudgingly or of necessity, but willingly." And when our Saviour declares, that whosoever shall give a cup of cold water to a disciple in the name of a disciple, or to a disciple as such, "shall not lose his reward: he only limits the motive so far as was necessary to make the gift a religious gift.—It will hardly be supposed that every one who may give to pious men as such, is a genuinely religious character. This would be a very unsafe, as well as unscriptural criterion for ascertaining piety.—Herod heard John the Baptist gladly for a time—the Jews were willing for a season to rejoice in his light: and no doubt, either Herod or the Jews would have contributed more than a cup of cold water to his accommodation, and yet none of them were pious characters. The Apostle Paul speaks very doubtfully of the piety of the Galatians, who at a former time "would if possible, have plucked out their own eyes and given them unto him. It appears therefore evident, that munificence may be exercised towards religious men or religious objects as such, without genuine piety. And such seems to be the munificence which our Saviour says shall not lose its reward.

Some have objected, that it would give too much importance to external duty, to suppose it connected even with a temporal reward. To this we answer that the present scheme only places the duty in question, on the same ground on which the scriptures place many of the moral virtues which are necessary to the good order of society. Every one knows that the scriptures encourage temperance by the promise of health, diligence by competence, honesty by reputation, and sobriety and prudence by length of days. And if no christian doubts either of the existence, or the fulfilment of such promises as these, why should he overlook or discard from his creed, those passages of the sacred volume which appear so plainly to connect religious liberality with temporal prosperity.

On this subject however, one caution may be suggested; religious liberality will not make every man pre-eminently rich. Temperance has the promise of health, yet every temperate man does not enjoy health in its highest degree; the promise is sufficiently fulfilled if his temperance improve his health. So in the present case, infinite wisdom has its reasons for the allotment of every man's condition, and the promise to religious liberality is abundantly fulfilled, if it be con-

nected with more prosperity than would have been experienced in the exercise of religious parsimony.

It does not appear necessary to spend much time in explaining how these promises may be fulfilled without any thing miraculous. Should a whole community contribute liberally to the service of God, he could easily fructify their seasons, rebuke the devourer in their fields, and spread a face of prosperity over their territory. Should but a small proportion practice this duty; if he has the ordering of our health and sickness, and that of our families; if our lives and the lives of our flocks and herds are in his hands, and all our floating property under his controul, he can easily remunerate our services by means hardly perceptible to ourselves and wholly unobserved by the generality of the world—Besides what should hinder our believing in the consecration of estates? The acquisitions of the pious frequently descend to remote posterity, whilst we have seen estates suddenly gathered in religious parsimony, and as suddenly dissipated; they vanished like a meteor and left no trace, or at least no blessing behind them.

C.

Religious Intelligence.

FOREIGN.

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF PROTESTANT MISSIONARY STATIONS AND MISSIONARIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

[Continued from page 142.]

DELHI.

A city of India, 976 miles N. W. from Calcutta, once the capital of the Patan and Mogul Empires. It formerly covered a space of twenty miles, and its present buildings and ruins occupy nearly as much. It is greatly improving, under the protection of the British Government; to which it is in reality subject, although nominally under the authority of the Mogul.

Baptist Society.

John Kerr.

Mr. Kerr appears to have very recently visited Delhi. He reports that the Word of God is heard with willingness and attention, much to his encouragement and surprise, as

he had been told that it could not be preached with safety in that city.

DEMARARA.

In South America.

London Missionary Society.

LE RESOUVENIR. 1808.

John Smith.

Here Mr. Wray labored for several years with much success. Upwards of 900 Negroes attended worship, and were much attached to the Missionary. Since his removal, other Missionaries have labored here; and Mr. John Smith is now on his way thither.

GEORGE TOWN. 1809.

John Davies, Richard Elliot.

A considerable number of Negroes repair to George Town, to hear Mr.

John Davies, some from the distance of many miles. The Chapel is crowded, and many listen at the doors and windows. More than a thousand attend on Sunday Morning. Not fewer than 5000 Negroes attend in rotation, a great number of whom learn the Catechism. They have established among themselves an Auxiliary Missionary Society, composed of People of Color and of Slaves, whose subscriptions, inserted in their last Report, amounted to 189L.

Wesleyan Methodists.

Thomas Talboys, John Mortier.

Mr. Talboys writes:—"We have in Society six whites, and 358 colored and blacks. The Society is in a good state. We enjoy peace in our borders. Love appears to be the cement that binds us together; and the people appear to be growing in grace, and divine knowledge."

DIGAH.

A Station twelve miles to the N. W. of Patna, in Hindostan, about 320 miles N. W. of Calcutta, on the south bank of the Ganges.

Baptist Society.—1809.

William Moore, Joshua Rowe.

Brindabund, Ram-prisada, *Natives.*

At present, Messrs. Moore and Rowe are engaged in an European School, and superintend three Native Schools, containing about 100 Children. The Society here possess a valuable Mission-house, and they have procured ground to erect a School-house. A rich Native of Benares has agreed to give 300 rupees per month for the support of a School, for the reception of all classes—a striking proof of the beneficial operations of the Gospel upon the Heathen, even where conversion is not produced.

DINAGEPORE & SADAMAH'L.
Dinagepore is a city in Bengal, about 240 miles N. of Calcutta—population about 40,000. Sadamah'l is a few miles from Dinagepore.

Baptist Society.—1814.

Ignatius Fernandez.

Sixty-one Hindoos have become Christians. In the School there are 43 Children.

DOMINICA.

An Island in the West-Indies.

Wesleyan Methodists.—1788.

William Beacock. Members, 710.

FAIRFIELD.

In Canada; now called New-Fairfield.

United Brethren.—1734.

Christian Fred. Dencke,
John Renatus Schmidt.

(See under the head Goseen, some account of Fairfield.)

In 1815, the Settlement was destroyed by fire; and the Congregation was dispersed. By the last accounts, the members were again collected, to the number of 109 Indian Brethren and Sisters, who resided in huts where Fairfield formerly stood. They had been visited by some of the Brethren from Bethlehem; and Brother Schmidt had united himself to Brother Dencke, who, with his wife, had been mercifully preserved during their wanderings. A place of residence had been fixed on and measured out, in a more convenient spot, which had received the name of New-Fairfield.

FLINT RIVER.

A Settlement in North America, among the Creek Indians.

United Brethren.

This Settlement was formed in 1734; but has been, for the present suspended, in consequence of the unsettled state of the country.

FREE TOWN.

The chief town of the colony of Sierra Leone.

Wesleyan Methodists.

William Davies, Samuel Brown.

Mr. Davies takes an active share in the instruction of the re-captured Negro Children. Mr. Brown lately sailed.

GAMBIER.

A Settlement situated among the Bagoes, at Kapparoo, in Western Africa, a Native Town on the Coast, about 70 miles N. W. of Sierra Leone.

Church Missionary Society.

Jonathan Solomon Klein,
Emanuel Anthony, *Native Usher.*

[*To be continued.*]

DOMESTIC.

The fourth Report of the Managers of the Norfolk Bible Society, submitted at the Annual Meeting, held on the 10th of March, 1818.

On a review of our labors for the past year, we are gratified in being able to report, that our society is still in a prosperous state. We feel happy indeed to assure you, that there has been no decay of zeal in our members, and, we hope, but little in ourselves. We trust that a plain and short statement of what we have been doing, will satisfy your just expectations, and secure the continuance of your support.

Our receipts for the past

year, are	\$386 56
Our expenditures for the same period,	300 00
The balance in the Treasury, is	113 11 $\frac{1}{2}$
The number of Bibles distributed, is	176
That of Testaments,	145
Bibles sold at cost,	8
Testaments,	3
Bibles on hand,	27
Testaments,	14

Of the expenditures, the sum of one hundred and fifty dollars has been forwarded as a donation to the American Bible Society, according to the terms and principles of our union with that body. The balance has been spent in the purchase of Bibles and Testaments for distribution in our own Borough, and the adjacent counties.

We would mention here, that in order to extend our usefulness as widely as possible, we have appointed a number of agents in different sections of our district, to receive contributions, and distribute books for us, in their respective neighborhoods. From several of these correspondents, we have been happy to receive the most friendly assurances of co-operation in our design. Some of them too, we understand, have made some small collections for our funds, though we cannot tell the amount. We would strongly recommend a renewal of this application the ensuing year, and we must persuade ourselves, that a call of such a

nature, which speaks to all the best sensibilities of man, cannot be received by reflecting minds, with indifference or neglect.

And here too, we must inform you, that we have received several donations from friendly individuals, who could not satisfy their zeal by the small annual contribution they were called to pay. Among other instances of this kind, we beg leave to report, with grateful honor to the dead, a gift from the late Wm. F. W. Boush, of Princess-Anne, of a small lot of land in Kempsville, which he gave us in his last sickness, as a dying proof of his attachment to our cause. Such examples of generosity are indeed most refreshing to our spirits, particularly from the evidence they furnish that our object is appreciated, and that our Society is gaining ground in the hearts of the pious. We would just add, as a further proof of the same thing, that we have also received the subscriptions of several new members, more than in any former year.

On this occasion, it may be pleasing to you to have a short view of our labors since the establishment of our Society in 1814, four years ago.

Our receipts for this period, have been	\$1536 64
Our expenditures,	1433 53
The number of Bibles distributed, is	643
That of Testaments,	1241
To the Bible Society of Virginia,	\$100
To the Bible Society of New-York,	50
To the American Bible Society,	450

We have also made the following donations from our funds, in aid of the general cause, beyond the limits of our own district:

To the Bible Society of Virginia, \$100

To the Bible Society of New-York, 50

To the American Bible Society, 450

From this statement, we trust it will appear to your satisfaction, that we have not been altogether idle in the vineyard of our Lord. We have sent the word of God, with all its hopes and consolations, into the cabins of the poor—we have laid it on the pillows of the sick—we have put it into the hands of the little children in our Sunday-schools, and other similar charities. We have lent our

aid in sending it to the French in Canada, and Louisiana, to the Indians in South-America, and to the Savage on the banks of the Missouri. In a word, we have endeavored, according to our opportunity and ability, to assist in wafting this compendium of blessings, to all the sons and daughters of Poverty and Sorrow, throughout our country and the world.

In the mean time, we have enjoyed the reward of our labors in their effects. We have seen a spirit of inquiry after religious truth, and a thirst for the knowledge of the Scriptures, excited and diffused through the different classes of our population. We have seen also, the beginning of a most laudable zeal for providing the means of instruction for the poor; and a more general habit of attention to the wants and sorrows of the suffering classes of society. In short, we have seen the whole face of our community brightening around us, with some rays of that divine light which has been shed upon it from Heaven; and in every feature of its improvement, we can clearly discern the influence of the Word of God, which we have labored to diffuse.

In raising our eyes to more distant scenes of operation, we are delighted to observe the continued and increasing diligence and success of our kindred Societies. In our own country, the American Bible Society, with which we have the honor to be associated in the common cause, is daily gaining strength and influence. From all parts of the Union, contributions are sent to its funds; many auxiliary associations are formed, and Christians of all denominations are united in its support. The Society in the mean time, being thus furnished with the means of benevolence, is beginning to act with vigor and effect, particularly by establishing stereotype presses; and by preparing translations of the Scriptures into the different native languages of our country. In this manner, we cannot doubt that the institution will prove a *fountain of life* to the nation, and soon send forth those *streams of sal-*

vation which shall make glad the city of our God.

Throughout Europe too, and in various parts of Asia, the operations of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and other similar institutions on the continent, are still felt in the blessings they diffuse. From the ends of the earth we hear the voice of prayer, and the songs of salvation are wafted to our ears upon every breeze. Indeed, the constant and signal labor and success of these Societies throughout the world, sufficiently indicate the source from which they have flowed. The zeal which now pervades the whole Christian Church, for the diffusion of the Bible, is not the light and transient ebullition of human feeling; but the deep and lasting impulse of the Spirit of God.

Under the influence of this conviction, we again call upon you to renew and increase your exertions in support of our Society in this place. Indeed, we cannot satisfy our consciences without pressing it upon yours, to consider the duty of aiding us in our undertaking, with your contributions, your sympathy, and your prayers. Thus far, we apprehend we have done nothing worthy of our cause, or even of ourselves. We certainly occupy no obscure corner of a great nation; and if our zeal were at all equal to our means, might make our Society a most important link in that chain of love, which is now binding our country and the world in its compass. The wants of the poor in our own district, are far more urgent than is easily believed. Besides this, our union with the National Society, opens a new and ample range for our benevolence, among the population of our Western Country; among the natives of the West and South; and finally, among all the tribes of Pagans throughout the world.

Let us come forward then, with new life and energy, in the work to which we are called. Let us devote some portion of that ~~which~~ our God has given us, to the service of sending his word of life and truth to the poor of every land. *The blessing of him*

that is ready to perish, will come upon us—The widow and the orphan will pray for our welfare—And in the great and final day, the Lord himself will give us our reward.

HYDROPHOBIA.

Died, on the 27th day of March, Edward Taylor, youngest son of Mrs. Sarah Taylor, of this City, aged about 12 years.

The circumstances of this mournful case are briefly these: Forty-five days before death, E. T. was bitten by a dog belonging to the family.—Previously to this, the dog had manifested an unusual degree of ill-nature; but no other symptom, as we understand, of madness. At the time when the wound was inflicted, the subject of it was amusing himself with experiments on the temper of the animal; and there is reason to believe that the dog seized him without knowing precisely what was seized. Because, the boy being with the dog on the outside of a small house used as a kennel, kicked against the side of the house, and uttering the customary sounds for encouraging dogs, suddenly placed his hand on a hole in the kennel. The dog sprung forward, and inflicted a severe wound both in the back of the hand, and in the palm next the thumb. The dog was soon after tied; and when the writer of this saw him, was entirely calm; eating freely; showing no horror of water; without froth about the mouth; recognizing the members of the family; and giving the usual indications of affection when kindly called.

Immediately after the infliction of the wound, the part was well washed with strong brine; and some other simple remedies were applied. As soon however, as it was seriously apprehended that the dog was mad, recourse was had to the East-Indian composition, usually called the *bezoar stone*. This stone was applied four or five times to the wounded parts, and was said to have performed its office perfectly well.* The anxious mother became entirely easy on the subject, fully believing that by the virtue of the stone, her son had been

secured against the *dreadful disease*. It may be proper, however, to observe, that every direction given by the owner of the stone was punctiliously observed; and that the wound was kept open for several weeks. At length however, it was healed, and all was tho't to be well.

On the forty-second day after the bite was inflicted, E. T. began to complain. The symptoms precisely resembled the appearance attending diseases common to the season. It was apprehended that he had taken cold, and that he was *bilious*. A dose of calomel was administered by the mother at night; which, not operating sufficiently, it was thought advisable to aid by glauber salts next morning. In attempting to swallow the solution, such difficulty was discerned, that the writer of this article was immediately sent for; and found the sufferer lying in bed, with no symptom that could in the least indicate disease, except a continual sighing; for which no reason could be assigned. One or two experiments, however, with liquids, induced the suspicion that it was a case of hydrophobia. In these, and in every other, that was made, *the difficulty was not in swallowing; but in getting the water into the mouth, and the lips closed upon it. That once accomplished; the swallowing was perfectly easy.* This decided fact overthrows a hypothesis, which has considerable currency, respecting the prominent symptom of the disease. E. T. was a boy of uncommon resolution, and made most powerful efforts to resist the spasmodic motions produced by every attempt to receive liquids. On the approach of water, however, a *working* in his breast and shoulders took place, which increased as the liquid approached his lips; and in every instance in which he succeeded in swallowing, there seemed to be a convulsive motion just as the mouth and cup came in contact; and the water was rather thrown into the mouth, than taken in the usual way. At other times, the moment that the liquid touched the lips of the patient, his jaws were thrown wide

open, and his tongue thrust out of the mouth, as far as, for its length, it could be projected.

Within a few hours after any strong symptoms of the disease had been developed, the spasms had greatly increased in violence; and the affection which at first was produced only by attempting to swallow liquids, was brought on by almost any cause, such as the patient's speaking; opening the door of the room; waving the hand over him; or any thing else that put the air about him in sudden motion: so that they might at length be said to be continual.

He complained chiefly, for the greater part of the time, to use his own words, *of the beating of his heart.* The heat of the surface was considerable, but not extremely great—The action of the pulse very rapid, but the stroke feeble. One hundred drops of laudanum given in the course of a few hours, seemed to increase the restlessness, and rather aggravate the symptoms. Towards the close, great complaints were made of heat in the head; and at the patient's request, cloths wet with cold vinegar, were constantly applied. The poor sufferer, during the whole time, knew his friends; and although naturally a most affectionate child, he appeared, during the short period of the disease, to be much more so than usual. The kindest terms which language affords were adopted to express his feelings towards his afflicted mother, and other relatives. The only indications of an alienation of reason made by him, consisted in his once or twice, entreating his surrounding friends by name, to pull him out of the water, and not suffer him to be drowned. Except this, he appeared to be in the full exercise of his reasoning powers. His eyes, without any expression of fierceness, were so brilliant as to require considerable effort to look him in the face. The course of the disease, as has just been intimated, was very short. It was not more than twenty hours after the first appearances of hydrophobia were exhibited, until the agony was over. The symptoms

became worse so rapidly, that what was thought of as a remedy one hour, was seen to be totally unfit the next; and the very respectable physicians who were called in, could only look on, and acknowledge the imperfection of the science of medicine.

We have thought proper to give the foregoing case, because we think that it may be useful. For, it hence appears,

1. That the symptoms of madness in a dog have not been well defined. An animal may be affected with the disease, that will both eat and drink, and that does not froth at the mouth.
2. It would seem that the *bezoar stone* ought not to be depended on as a preventive of the disease. *It was fully tried in this case and failed.*—To this it may be added that the use of the *stone* for that purpose is not known in those parts of Europe which have the fullest and most intimate intercourse with India, in London for instance. Nay farther, it is not known, at least not depended on, even in India. We have very lately read the history of a case which occurred in that country, in which instead of the *bezoar stone*, recourse was had to blood letting and calomel.

To these remarks of our own, we will add a quotation from *Orfila on Poisons*, the latest work on that subject, that has appeared in this country. After enumerating the various remedies that have been celebrated, the author concludes with these words: “These facts lead us to conclude, that in the actual state of science, we know no medicine which can constantly cure hydrophobia when it is well ascertained; and consequently that it is indispensable to cauterize the wound with a hot iron, in order to stop its progress. The good effects of this practice will depend upon the time at which it is done. If delayed too long, they will be null.”

There is one other reason why we have noticed this case. The poor youth, who was thus untimely cut off was wild and thoughtless, as boys ordinarily are. His mother had taken much pains in his religious

education. He had learned from his Bible and the catechism, the doctrines of the Gospel; and knew theoretically, better than most children, what is necessary for salvation. Still however, it was feared that all the labour thus employed, was lost.—During his last hours, however, E. Taylor seemed as though new principles had been implanted. He prayed with the fervour of one dying, and expressed himself in such terms as an experienced christian might not have been ashamed to use. A judicious person who sat up with him, has declared that nothing that he ever witnessed struck him with as much force as the dying exercises of this boy—such knowledge did he discover of the depravity of the heart, of his need of a Saviour, of the offices of Christ; and of the general plan of redemption through him—And such hopes did he express of being forever happy through the pardoning mercy and sanctifying grace of God. This afforded unspeakable consolation under a trial of peculiar severity; and is regarded both as most ample compensation for all the pains taken in giving religious instruction, and great encouragement to pious parents to persevere in honest endeavors to fulfil the vows of God, amidst the greatest difficulties, and apparently the justest fears that it is all in vain.

LITERARY.

1. We are pleased to learn that A. Finley of Philadelphia has in press, and expects shortly to publish *Leland's Advantage and Necessity of Revelation*. The character of this work has stood very high since its first appearance. We do not know

any that can well supply its place; and have long thought it strange that a book so scarce, and so valuable had not been reprinted in this country. We heartily wish that the publisher may be rewarded for his labor, and that the book may be generally circulated and carefully studied.

2. T. B. Wait & Co. of Boston have issued proposals for republishing Bellamy's New Translation of the Bible.

AGRICULTURAL.

At a meeting of the Agricultural Society of Virginia, held on the 10th of March, the following premiums were proposed, and ordered to be printed.

JOHN ADAMS, *Secretary.*

Resolved, That a premium of fifty dollars value be given for the best essay on the general management of a Virginia Farm, founded on practical experience or observation, and combining a good rotation with the management of live stock, the accumulation of manure and other objects pertaining to the business of a farm.

Also Resolved, That a premium of forty dollars value be given for the best rotation, embracing Corn, Wheat and Clover.

Also a premium of forty dollars value be given for the best rotation, embracing Corn, Wheat, Clover and Tobacco.

It is to be understood that the Society reserve the power of deciding whether the essays offered merit the premiums; and it is expected that the essays shall be delivered to the secretary, on or before the third Monday in October next.

To Correspondents.

We are happy to find that our files of Manuscript are enlarging, and the number of our friends increasing. We have on hand several valuable communications, which shall appear in the next No. We assure 'A Provincial Protestant,' that he has not mistaken our views; and that we shall be happy to see the outline drawn by him filled up. Our work is devoted to the interests of sound learning and true religion; and we rejoice in the co-operation of all who have similar views and feelings. We wish, among other objects of utility, to call forth the talents of our citizens; to afford an opportunity for men of information to communicate knowledge; and for ingenuous youth to exercise their powers. But let young writers study their subjects well; and at all times do their *very best*.